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FEDERAL ELECTION
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF GENERAL
COUNSEL

18 April 2000

APR 25 11 10 AM '00

The Honorable Scott E. Thomas
Chairman
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463

MUR 5006

Dear Chairman Thomas:

I am filing a complaint with the Federal Election Commission asserting Hardball, hosted by Chris Matthews on CNBC should register as a "political action committee" or "affiliated political action committee" with the Republican National Committee, the presidential election committee for Governor George w. Bush, and the exploratory US Senate campaign for Rudolph Guliani. The Commission should review the broadcasts of Hardball for possible violation of the Federal Election Commission rulings governing "reasonable access" (or "equal time") or to be in violation of Federal Election Commission ruling prohibiting "any corporate contribution whatever" to include any gift of money or anything of value for the purpose of influencing a Federal election. This letter also serves as a complaint to the Commission against that Hardball and its host Chris Matthews has become inappropriate corporate electronic voter guides advocating the election of an individual or group of political candidates for Federal elective office.

The Commission's Associate General Counsel/Policy, its AO 1998-17 ruling does not address the substance of this inquiry. The exemption holding of the Commission AO 1998-17 ruling contemplates fair and balanced commentary and news reporting practices. Moreover, the standards and practices of today's news organizations, as conducted by Hardball, have become not only more aggressive, but also has become less responsive to public expectations of fairness in news reporting, accuracy in opinion interpretation and to equal access of candidates or their positions for elective office.

The Commission should not permit its opinion in the AO 1998-17 ruling to be used as a cover for irresponsible broadcasters and journalists to advance their surreptitious political agenda neither to advance the political expectations of favored candidates over another nor to destroy disfavored candidates.

The airwaves belong to the public not by any broadcast news organization. The public has a right and an expectation to fair and balanced broadcast news reporting. The complaint here would not "limit or burden in any way first amendment freedoms of the press," and would not interfere with "the unfettered right of newspapers, TV networks, and other media to cover and comment on political campaigns."

21-04-402-3226

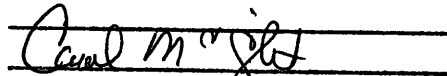
In today's news reporting environment, there cannot be any public policy determination that broadcast news organizations may engage in excessive political coverage and not have their practices to be viewed as an inappropriate contributory toward a particular candidate or political party.

Sincerely,



Subscribed and affirmed to

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
18 day of April 18 2000



Notary Public

My Commission Expires 6-15-02
Otero County State of NM

21.04.02.3227